



**Ohio's Part B State Systemic Improvement
Plan (SSIP)**

Phase II Report

April 1, 2016

Evaluation

A team of ODE staff, State Support Team directors, external consultants, and stakeholders representing various organizations and agencies throughout the state (see Appendix A) led Ohio's evaluation planning efforts. The evaluation plan developed through these efforts measures both the process and impact of implementing evidence-based practices to support gains in early literacy skills for students in preschool through grade three, with accelerated rates of improvement for students at the greatest risk of reading difficulty. ODE used tools developed by national technical assistance centers, such as the implementation hexagon developed by SISEP (2013a), to aid in the development of data, infrastructure, and evaluation systems.

Evaluation includes:

- A. Alignment with Theory of Action and Implementation Measurement (OSEP Guidance Section 3(a));
- B. Stakeholder Involvement (OSEP Guidance Section 3(b));
- C. Evaluation Data Collection and Analyses (OSEP Guidance Section 3(c)); and
- D. Use of Evaluation Data for Decision-Making (OSEP Guidance Section 3(d)).

Alignment with Theory of Action and Implementation Measurement

Evaluation activities primarily focused on the preparatory work needed so that the external evaluation can be implemented in a timely manner. The evaluation will be conducted by an external evaluator selected through a competitive bid process; however ongoing evaluation expertise has been provided by Ohio's State Personnel Development Grant and Dyslexia Pilot Project evaluator, Dr. Julie Morrison from the University of Cincinnati, to develop the evaluation plan and provide support throughout the implementation of the evaluation. ODE staff and the SSIP stakeholder group developed the theory of action (Appendix E) as part of Phase I. The theory of action is reflected in the logic model (Figure 4, below), developed as part of the Phase II process. The SSIP Core Team and a group of State Support Team directors, with guidance and leadership from Dr. Morrison, developed the logic model using six guiding questions:

- 1) What is the current situation that we intend to impact?
- 2) What will it look like when we achieve the desired situation or outcome?
- 3) What behaviors need to change for that outcome to be achieved?
- 4) What knowledge or skills do people need before the behavior will change?
- 5) What activities need to be performed to cause the necessary learning?

6) What resources will be required to achieve the desired outcome?

(Millar, Simeone, & Carnevale, 2001)

The team identified inputs, outputs (activities and participants), and short, medium, and long-term outcomes for three goals and six strategies/implementation objectives as represented in the logic model. The short-term outcomes represent changes in adult learning (i.e., knowledge and skills), the medium-term outcomes represent changes in adult behaviors/practices, and the long-term outcomes represent changes in student early literacy outcomes. The logic model will continue to be refined, as necessary, prior to the launch of the evaluation.

The SSIP Core Team and Dr. Morrison developed and proposed eight evaluation questions (see Table 5 and Appendix F). The content of the logic model drove the development of the evaluation questions. The evaluation questions directly align with the theory of action and with the short, medium, and long-term outcomes contained in the logic model.

ODE expects that the external evaluator will conduct both formative and summative evaluations on all aspects of Ohio's Early Literacy Plan, including infrastructure development activities and the support for districts who are implementing the evidence-based practices. The external evaluator will be expected to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to inform the evaluation.

The external evaluator will measure benchmarks of the fidelity of implementation throughout the process. The evaluator will measure implementation and impact in the following areas: teacher and instructional coaches' knowledge and application of LETRS principles, structures for teacher-based teams at the local level to review early literacy data in order to modify instruction for individual learners, preschool through third grade student early literacy progress and outcomes, and family and community engagement levels specific to early literacy efforts.

Figure 4: Ohio’s Early Literacy Logic Model

Goal 1. All (100%) preschool-grade 3 teachers/specialists in targeted buildings within selected districts will engage their teachers and administrators in professional learning (i.e., training and instructional coaching) to increase their competent use of evidence-based early literacy and language core instruction and interventions within a proactive, preventive, equitable system of supports by 2021.

Strategy 1.1. Training and coaching teachers and administrators in evidence-based early literacy and language core instruction, strategic interventions, and intensive, individualized interventions within a proactive, preventive, equitable system of supports that extends outside of the school environment and into the home.

Strategy 1.2. Training language and literacy coaches at the district and regional levels and trainers at the state and regional levels.

Inputs	Outputs		Adult Performance and Student Outcomes		
	Action Step	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
<p>Staff: ODE Project Staff State Support Team Directors & Staff External Evaluator</p> <p>Consultants: Dr. Louisa Moats Dr. Jennifer Pierce Certified national trainers</p> <p>Materials: LETRS modules, training materials & assessments; Instructional coaching training materials and tools; LETRS principal training materials; Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory</p> <p>Technology: LETRS blended learning platform, early literacy data dashboard</p>	<p>Develop, train, and coach school teams in <i>Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)</i>, addressing each essential component of reading instruction.</p> <p>Provide professional development to principals in leadership practices to promote language and literacy development.</p> <p>Provide coaching of evidence-based early literacy and language core instruction and interventions within Ohio Improvement Process.</p> <p>Provide professional development to district coaches in language and literacy standards and instructional coaching.</p>	<p>School teams comprised of preschool-grade 3 teachers, intervention specialists, speech-language pathologists, Title I reading teachers, principals; State Support Team early literacy specialists</p> <p>Principals</p> <p>State Support Team early literacy specialists, elementary level Building Leadership Team and Teacher-Based Team members</p> <p>Internal district coaches</p>	<p>School team members will demonstrate competency in LETRS principles following the training and transfer that knowledge and skill into their classrooms and in their communication with families.</p> <p>Internal coaches will demonstrate mastery of the content (LETRS) and process (instructional coaching) following the training and transfer that knowledge and skill to their support of teachers in classrooms.</p>	<p>Teachers of students in preschool-grade 3 will implement early literacy and language core instruction using LETRS principles with fidelity, as assessed by an instructional coach.</p> <p>Internal coaches will provide instructional coaching in the use of LETRS principles, as documented by the LETRS coaching program.</p>	<p>Students in preschool-grade 3 will demonstrate gains in early literacy skills with accelerated rates of improvement for students at the greatest risk of reading difficulty.</p>

Goal 2. Within each participating district, 100% of participating elementary schools will demonstrate the capacity to accelerate early literacy and language achievement for all students through the implementation of proactive, data-driven systems providing a continuum of supports implemented with fidelity by 2021.

Strategy 2.1. Decision support data systems are in place to inform decisions regarding adult implementation and student outcomes.

Strategy 2.2. Infrastructure at the state, regional and district levels provides a continuum of supports for teaming, planning, scheduling, and access to intervention.

Strategy 2.3. Proactive systems foster external partnerships (e.g., teacher preparation programs, early childhood providers, family and community supports).

Inputs	Outputs		Adult Performance and Student Outcomes		
	Action Step	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
<p>Staff: ODE Project Staff State Support Team Directors & Staff External Evaluator</p> <p>Materials: DIBELS Next/AIMSweb training materials; Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory; MTSS materials; Family engagement guidance materials; Levels of Collaboration Survey</p> <p>Technology: Early literacy data dashboard</p> <p>Partners: Head Start, DD preschool programs, libraries, childcare providers, business partners, IHEs, faith-based orgs, after-school programs</p>	<p>Train school teams in data literacy for screening, progress monitoring, and instructional decision making within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).</p> <p>District Leadership Teams and Building Leadership Teams will establish family and community partnerships to promote early literacy development.</p>	<p>School teams comprised of preschool-grade 3 teachers, intervention specialists, speech-language pathologists, Title I reading teachers, principals; State Support Team early literacy specialists</p> <p>District Leadership Teams and elementary level Building Leadership Team and Teacher-Based Team members</p>	<p>School team members will demonstrate competent usage of indicators of basic early literacy skills (e.g., DIBELS Next, AIMSweb) for screening, progress monitoring, instructional decision making, and communicating with families within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).</p> <p>Schools and teachers will increase family engagement in literacy development.</p>	<p>Teachers of students in preschool-grade 3 will use data literacy skills to implement screening, progress monitoring, and instructional decision making with fidelity, as assessed by the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory and the LETRS implementation checklist.</p> <p>District Leadership Team and Building Leadership Team members will use collaborative partnerships to guide the development of and access to community-wide systems of support for literacy, as assessed by the Levels of Collaboration Survey.</p>	<p>Students in preschool-grade 3 will demonstrate gains in indicators of basic early literacy skills with accelerated rates of improvement for students at the greatest risk of reading difficulty.</p>

Goal 3.

All (100%) of the participating districts will engage their district and building administrators and teacher leaders in professional learning (i.e., training and instructional coaching) to strengthen leadership and systems change practices that support evidence-based early literacy and language core instruction and interventions by 2021.

Strategy 3.1. Implementation of Ohio Improvement Process’s shared leadership structures to promote proactive, equitable practices at every level.

Inputs	Outputs		Adult Performance and Student Outcomes		
	Action Step	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
<p>Staff: ODE Project Staff State Support Team Directors & Staff External Evaluator</p> <p>Materials: Ohio Improvement Process 5-step process resources; LETRS principal training materials; Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory</p> <p>Technology: Early literacy data dashboard</p>	<p>Implement the Ohio Improvement Process, targeting evidence-based early literacy and language core instruction and interventions.</p> <p>Provide coaching to Teacher-Based Teams in strengthening core instruction through the use of LETRS principles and data-based decision making.</p>	<p>Members of the District Leadership Teams and elementary level Building Leadership Teams; State Support Team early literacy specialists.</p> <p>Members of elementary level Teacher-Based Teams; instructional coaches; State Support Team early literacy specialists.</p>	<p>District Leadership Team, Building Leadership Team, and Teacher-Based Team members will support early literacy instruction and intervention through shared leadership to promote proactive, equitable practices at the district, building, and classroom level.</p>	<p>Ohio Improvement Process shared leadership structures will be used comprehensively at the district, building, and teacher levels to ensure shared accountability for data-driven strategic planning to support (with instructional coaching) the implementation of a proactive continuum of early literacy and language core instruction and interventions.</p>	<p>Students in preschool-grade 3 will demonstrate gains in indicators of basic early literacy skills with accelerated rates of improvement for students at the greatest risk of reading difficulty.</p>

Stakeholder Involvement

During Phase II of the SSIP process, various stakeholders participated in development of the six strategies/implementation objectives and the short, medium, and long-term outcomes identified in the logic model, as well the revision and refinement of the logic model and evaluation questions. ODE also planned for meaningful stakeholder evaluation analysis and discussion during two stakeholder meetings held in January and March of 2016. For Phase II, ODE invited additional stakeholders who have knowledge and expertise in the field of early literacy. ODE invited a total of 62 stakeholders to these meetings and more than 50 stakeholders from across the state attended (see Appendix A). The majority of stakeholders who participated in Phase II also attended the Phase I stakeholder meetings.

ODE invited SSIP stakeholders to the first Phase II stakeholder meeting in January of 2016. Ann Bailey, M.A., from the University of Minnesota and Dr. Julie Morrison from the University of Cincinnati provided foundational information on evaluation to all stakeholders, including the need for evaluation, process versus impact evaluation, formative versus summative evaluation, implementation drivers, methods and measurement, analysis techniques, and timelines. ODE staff organized stakeholders into six teams of eight or nine people. Each team had representation from school districts, parents, State Support Team staff, early literacy staff, and/or other state agencies. Dr. Morrison provided the teams with criteria by which to judge the quality of the logic model and the evaluation questions during the meeting, using criteria developed by Connell and Klem (2000) and Wingate and Schroeter (2015).

Stakeholders reviewed the six proposed evaluation questions using a list of criteria and definitions for those criteria by which each question should be judged. Dr. Morrison asked stakeholders if they perceived each evaluation question to be evaluative, pertinent, reasonable, specific, and answerable. Stakeholders provided feedback, which the SSIP Core Team then used to modify the evaluation questions. The team presented the revised evaluation questions to the stakeholder group at their meeting in March of 2016. (See Table 5 and Appendix F for the evaluation questions.)

During the January 2016 meeting, the SSIP Core Team also asked stakeholders to define how they preferred to receive updates on the SSIP report, process, and progress. This was important data collection, as each stakeholder is expected to share this information with their constituents. ODE wants to ensure the shared information is easily accessible and understandable so that all stakeholders are receiving accurate information. ODE staff compiled and reviewed an extensive list of suggested communication strategies and are working with the Office of Communications to plan communication strategies accordingly. In addition to establishing practice-to-policy feedback loops, ODE staff are participating in "Leading by Convening" training to enhance efforts to engage stakeholders in SSIP implementation and evaluation.

Evaluation Data Collection and Analyses

Ohio's early literacy initiative is focused on meeting the needs of all students by strengthening core instruction and the provision of instructional supports and evidence-based interventions in inclusive settings. The intention is to cultivate capacity at both the district and regional levels to provide evidence-based literacy instruction/intervention using Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training and coaching. The evaluation will focus on all students' growth over time (i.e., beginning, middle, and end benchmark periods) on indicators of early literacy skills for students at or above benchmark, below benchmark, and well below benchmark.

Ohio's evaluation process will examine, both formatively and summatively, program outcomes using Guskey's (2002) framework for evaluating professional development for educators. The framework is comprised of five critical levels:

1. Level 1: Participants' reactions;
2. Level 2: Participants' learning;
3. Level 3: Organizational support and change;
4. Level 4: Use of new knowledge and skills; and
5. Level 5: Student learning outcomes.

These five levels will be used as the professional development evaluation framework across the entirety of the plan. Guskey (2002) states, "With each succeeding level, the process of gathering evaluation information gets a bit more complex. And because each level builds on those that come before, success at one level is usually necessary for success at higher levels" (p.46). It will be essential to ensure that evaluation information for the first step, and each subsequent step, is measured and accurate, given that each step of this framework builds on the previous level. ODE will work with the external evaluator to include this framework in the overall evaluation plan.

ODE and its stakeholders focused energy and effort on the development of a high-quality evaluation data plan, including: identifying currently available data points and the need for additional data; how data will be collected, analyzed, and reported; and how often data will be collected, analyzed, and reported. The SSIP Core Team and the external evaluator will work together to identify evaluation data points and benchmarks. ODE expects the external evaluator to develop a detailed plan for the different sources of data needed for each aspect of the evaluation plan; the method and frequency of data collection, analysis, and review; and guidelines on decision making based on those data. The SSIP Core Team will work closely with the external evaluator to determine the feasibility of the proposed plan. ODE also expects the external evaluator to conduct analyses of evaluation data to inform the process of scaling up the initiative within the districts who are initially participating and to those districts that will participate in the future. A sample of data collection tools, with associated timelines, is provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Proposed Evaluation Data Collection Plan

Evaluation Question	Proposed Measure(s)	Collection Timeline
To what extent did the teachers of students in preschool-grade 3 implement early literacy and language core instruction using evidence-based practices with fidelity?	Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) post-test, LETRS implementation tool (in development)	Annually in the Spring (due May 30)
To what extent did instructional coaches support teachers in the use of evidence-based early literacy practices?	Coaching fidelity tool (in development)	Annually in the Winter (due March 30)
To what extent did the teachers of students in preschool-grade 3 use data literacy skills to implement screening, progress monitoring, and instructional decision-making with fidelity?	Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory	Fall of Year 1 for each incoming cohort (Tier 1 section only) and then annually in the Spring
To what extent was the implementation of early literacy and language core instruction and interventions supported by the Ohio Improvement Process shared leadership structures at the district, building, and teacher levels?	Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory	Fall of Year 1 for each incoming cohort (Tier 1 section only) and then annually in the Spring
To what extent did students in kindergarten-grade 3 demonstrate gains in indicators of basic early literacy skills that met or exceeded national benchmark rates of improvement for students at the greatest risk of reading difficulty?	Early literacy curriculum-based measures (DIBELS Next or AIMSweb) Ohio’s Third Grade English Language Arts Achievement Test	Fall, Winter, and Spring CBM benchmark periods Annual Spring administration of Ohio’s Third Grade English Language Arts Test
To what extent did implementation of evidence-based early literacy instruction and intervention at the preschool level improve language and literacy skills at kindergarten entry?	Ohio’s Kindergarten Readiness Assessment	Annually in the Fall
To what extent did teachers increase family engagement in literacy development (in years 3-5 of the project)?	Levels of Collaboration Survey	Fall survey administration for each incoming cohort beginning in Year 3 and then

Evaluation Question	Proposed Measure(s)	Collection Timeline
		annually in the Spring
To what extent did District Leadership Team and Building Leadership Team members increase their level of collaboration with external partners to guide the development of and access to community-wide systems of support for literacy (in years 3-5 of the project)?	Levels of Collaboration Survey	Fall survey administration for each incoming cohort beginning in Year 3 and then annually in the Spring

The external evaluator will measure benchmarks for fidelity of implementation throughout the evaluation. Teacher and instructional coaches’ reactions to the professional development sessions (Guskey’s Level 1), knowledge (Guskey’s Level 2) and application (Guskey’s Level 4) of LETRS principles will be measured over time. Organizational support and change (Guskey’s Level 3) will also be evaluated as evident through measures of building and teacher-level team structures to promote data-based instructional decision making. Guskey’s Level 5—Student Learning Outcomes—will be measured for Ohio’s students using early literacy curriculum-based assessments (i.e., DIBELS Next or AIMSweb, per district choice). These scores can be compared to rates of improvement calculated from the national benchmarks for DIBELS Next and AIMSweb assessments. The SSIP Core Team, in collaboration with the external evaluator, the Third Grade Reading Guarantee Administrator, and the Early Literacy Project Manager will review all evaluation data as it becomes available. At a minimum, the team will review these data once per month. ODE will share evaluation data with the SSIP Stakeholder Team and the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children at a minimum of two times per year.

ODE will ensure sufficient resources are allocated and available for the external evaluation to be conducted as planned. ODE will work with the external evaluator to develop a budget that will allow for both formative and summative evaluation activities to be executed accurately, effectively, and in a timely manner.

Use of Evaluation Data for Decision-Making

The SSIP Core Team is currently working with a vendor to develop a web-based data dashboard for monitoring all evaluation data at a glance across participating districts and schools. This data system will be an integral part of the evaluation process, especially when decisions need to be made regarding the implementation of the early literacy plan. The SSIP Core Team will review data as often as necessary to make sound decisions regarding all aspects of the implementation of Ohio’s Early Literacy Plan.

ODE intends to make changes to the SSIP and any mid-course implementation corrections based on evaluation data and feedback gleaned from the previously described practice-to-policy feedback loops with initial implementation districts and State Support Teams. The

process for making changes to the SSIP will align with previous approaches. ODE will share recommended changes to the plan with the SSIP Stakeholder Team and the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children for input. Upon receiving stakeholder feedback, the SSIP Core Team will make changes to the plan prior to submission to the Office of Special Education Programs. ODE will modify activities listed within the SSIP as evaluation data are collected and analyzed and the appropriate decision-makers (e.g., ODE staff, State Support Team staff, stakeholders, etc.) have the opportunities to inform systems change based on effective practice-to-policy feedback loops.